



THE FUTURE OF OUR PARKS

LET’S HEAR ABOUT YOUR RECREATION NEEDS

By Mayor Gene Winstead

BLOOMINGTON’S ALMOST 9,000 ACRES OF parks and open space are highly valued by residents. During a recent community outreach process, part of the City’s strategic planning initiative Imagine Bloomington 2025, residents listed maintaining parks and providing stewardship of natural areas as priorities. Over the next several months, the City will prepare a master plan to guide citywide park and recreation improvements and operations. The City is currently gathering input on park and recreation needs, including how residents want to use Bloomington parks today and over the next 20 years.

We’d like input on how we can continually provide facilities for the more than 5,000 youth who participate in BAA and the 9,700 youth and adults who participate in the City’s Parks and Recreation programs. Are you an active senior today, or will you be one in the future? Feedback will help us determine your needs, as well as the desires of walkers, bikers and those who simply enjoy a peaceful visit to one of Bloomington’s natural areas.

In March, the City held a community open house and a series of focus group meetings with recreation associations, youth, seniors, families, other recreation providers, and natural resource and conservation groups. A citizen task force appointed by the City Council will prioritize those needs and develop an action plan for the future. A draft Park Master Plan will be reviewed at a community open house early this summer with the final plan scheduled for completion by September.

There is still time to participate in the initial needs assessment. Make your opinion and ideas known by taking the Bloomington Parks Survey, available during the month of April. To participate, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Parks survey, or pick up a survey at Parks and Recreation, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road.

For more information, call Randy Quale at 952-563-8877, e-mail parksrec@ci.bloomington.mn.us or visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Park Master Plan.

AIRPORT NOISE UPDATE

CITY MONITORING NOISE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES



TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF NOISE ON Bloomington properties, the City is continuing to monitor the operations of the north-south runway that opened in fall 2005. According to Community Development Director Larry Lee, aircraft compliance with operational procedures that minimize flights over Bloomington has been very good. “The Federal Aviation Administration has tested procedures to increase compliance with the turn-point procedure and minimize noise impacts in Bloomington,” Lee said.

Two lawsuits, one initiated by the cities of Eagan, Minneapolis and Richfield, and the other initiated by residents whose properties are most affected by airport noise, are currently in progress. The City will continue to monitor legal actions that would require the Metropolitan Airports Commission to insulate homes in the 60-64dB contours. In turn, the City will advocate for Bloomington residents to receive the same levels of additional mitigation as residents in other cities whose properties are similarly situated near the airport.

To date, all Bloomington properties in the 65db or greater contours whose homeowners agreed to insulation have been insulated. All homes and apartments identified for acquisitions as part of the new runway’s noise mitigation have been acquired. For more information, call Carolyn Lane at 952-563-8948.



NEW DIRECTOR ON BOARD

KIRBY TO LEAD COMMUNITY SERVICES

A NEW year brought new leadership to the City of Bloomington. Diann Kirby was promoted to Community Services Director in January. Over the last 10 years, Kirby served as the City’s Communications Administrator. Managing the City’s newsletters, video production, Web sites and cable franchise administration, she led the Communications Division to more than 30 local, state and national awards. Kirby, who now heads the Communications, Human Services, Parks and Recreation and Public Health

divisions, along with the City’s recreational facilities, said she is looking forward to her new role. “Change is always an opportunity to take a fresh look at what we’re doing right, what we could do differently and start creating some new possibilities,” she said. Kirby graduated from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where she majored in communications and English. After college, she began a career in broadcast journalism with an NBC affiliate in Waterloo-Cedar Rapids. Covering beats ranging from health care to the Iowa legislature, Kirby received several awards, including the Iowa Health Care Media Award in 1989.

In 1990, Kirby began as a producer and reporter for the City’s government access channel. She hosted two weekly news magazine programs and a monthly call-in show. In 1993, Kirby was promoted to Health Promotion and Communications Specialist in Public Health. Kirby earned a master’s degree in business communication at the University of St. Thomas in 2002. She is currently serving as president of the Bloomington Noon Rotary Club. Kirby replaced Community Services Director James Truax, who retired in January after more than 36 years of service with the City.

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